

APPENDIX 9

U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY TRIBAL ACTIVITIES

Region 9 of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA Region 9) is responsible for activities in California and Arizona. EPA Region 9 has been particularly active in: (1) addressing the environmental concerns of the indigenous tribes located in the border area of this region; and (2) encouraging greater tribal participation in the U.S.-Mexico Border XXI Program. Examples of EPA Region 9 support for the tribes include the following:

- In 1999, \$170,000 was allocated to enhance tribal involvement in the Border XXI Program. The funds are being used specifically to aid tribes in attending and participating in the nine Border XXI workgroup and subworkgroup meetings. Of that \$170,000, \$65,000 will be allocated to the Tohono O'odham Nation to hire a Border XXI coordinator. The remaining \$105,000 will be given to two California tribes (grants yet to be completed) to support outreach, including the publication of a newsletter, development of a web site, and defrayment of travel costs to attend meetings.
- In 1998, \$30,000 was made available through a grant to defray travel expenses for any tribal representative interested in attending a Border XXI workgroup meeting. The cost of travel was seen as being one of the most formidable impediments to tribal participation.
- The San Diego Border Liaison Office (SDBO) has held two open sessions for tribes to provide participants with: (1) a brief overview of the history of the Border XXI Program and of current activities; (2) information on environmental grants available to border tribes (described below); and (3) an opportunity to exchange information. The first open house, held August 12, 1997 was attended by 31 tribal representatives. At the second open house, held October 2, 1998, 33 tribal representatives from 14 border tribes were in attendance.
- In August 1998, a border tribal outreach coordinator joined the SDBO team. The coordinator is responsible for (1) conducting outreach to border tribes on Border XXI meetings, events, and issues; (2) overseeing grant projects awarded to border tribes; and (3) bridging the relationship between representatives of the border tribes and EPA Region 9.
- In February 1998, EPA sponsored the *Conference of Native American Nations on NAFTA and U.S.-Mexico Border Issues*. Held in San Diego, California, the conference brought together more than 60 federal, state, and tribal representatives to discuss the ongoing border environmental activities of the federal and state agencies, environmental concerns of the border tribes, and funding and mechanisms for tribal involvement in ongoing border activities.

GRANTS TO TRIBES In 1997, EPA Region 9 provided \$25,000 in grant funding to the Inter-Tribal Council of Arizona (ITCA) to assist tribes in addressing environmental issues identified in the *1996 U.S.-Mexico Border XXI Program: Framework Document* through the provision of travel and per diem costs. The ITCA will also assist tribal governments in planning and developing policies to address specific environmental conditions precipitated by border activities.

Through the Border Tribal Grant Program, \$17 million was allocated in 1997, and \$5 million was allocated in 1998 in grants for wastewater and drinking-water infrastructure projects. Of the 24 U.S. federally-recognized border tribes in California and Arizona, 14 submitted proposals. All 14 tribes were awarded funding for a total of 26 projects. Four of those projects have been complete and four more are under construction. One project is ready to begin

construction; two projects are under design; six projects are ready to start design; and nine projects are completing the planning phase.

For more information on particular grants awarded to border tribes, please see the chapter of the *U.S.-Mexico Border XXI Program: Progress Report 1996–2000* on the activities of the Water Workgroup.